



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 6, 2004

S. 1963

Wireless 411 Privacy Act

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on September 22, 2004*

S. 1963 would prohibit wireless telephone providers from listing subscribers' numbers in a directory unless the subscribers have authorized such services. Wireless telephone providers also would be required to remove a subscriber's number from any wireless directory assistance database if requested by a subscriber and without any charge to that subscriber.

Enacting S. 1963 could affect direct spending and receipts because providers who violate the provisions of the bill could be subject to civil or criminal penalties. Based on information from the Federal Communications Commission, CBO expects that there would be few violations of the bill's provisions. Thus, CBO estimates that any collections for civil or criminal penalties would not be significant. In addition, because the agency expects a relatively high degree of compliance with the bill's provisions, CBO estimates that any costs associated with enforcing the bill's requirements, which would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds, would not be significant.

S. 1963 contains intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), but CBO estimates that the resulting costs for state, local, and tribal governments would be minimal and would not exceed the threshold established in UMRA (\$60 million in 2004, adjusted annually for inflation). Section 3 (F) would specifically preempt state and local laws that require wireless telephone providers to publish directories of the numbers they serve. CBO is not aware of any such laws—based on conversations with state and local officials—and states generally are moving toward the standard that would be established in S. 1963. Therefore, CBO estimates that any associated costs would be minimal.

CBO has not completed an analysis of the private-sector mandates in the bill. That analysis will be provided later in a separate report.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Susanne S. Mehlman (for federal costs), and Sarah Puro (for the state, local, and tribal impact). This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.